FORETHOUGHTS

ON THE

GENERAL PACIFICATION

OF

EUROPE.

London:

SOLD BY J. WRIGHT, AND BY J. HATCHARD,
IN PICCADILLY.

1800.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Printed by J. BATESON,
Denmark-ſtr. Soho.

FORETHOUGHTS,

&c. &c. &c.

WHETHER the late changes in France are of a nature to operate the pacification of Europe, is a queſtion on which judgement may not be haſtily given. Thoſe changes are much too recent to have yet afforded the world any *experimental* ground for coming to a poſitive deciſion; and conviction upon this point, to uſe the juſt language of a late ſtate paper, "*can reſult* "ONLY *from* EXPERIENCE, *and the* EVI- "DENCE OF FACTS."

But,—while we are induced, in ſpeculating upon the conſequences of thoſe changes, to inquire, whether they diſcover any tendency to allay the internal agitations of France; and, by offering at length effectual

reſiſtance to thoſe violent vacillatory motions which maintain her in continual change, to bring her to ſettle again upon any of the old foundations, which a long career of national glory and proſperity had ſo deeply eſtabliſhed;—and while we are tempted to entertain a ſecret *wiſh*, that the nation ſo returning towards political reſt, may find it in "the reſtoration of the line "of Princes, which, for ſo many centuries, "maintained the French Nation in proſpe-"rity at home, and in conſequence and re-"ſpect abroad;"—as being, in truth, "an "event, which would at once remove all ob-"ſtacles in the way of negociation or peace; "confirming to France the *unmoleſted enjoy-"ment of its ancient territory*; and giving to "all the other nations of Europe, in tran-"quillity and peace, that ſecurity which they "are now compelled to ſeek by other means:" —while, I ſay, we are induced thus *to ſpeculate* and *to wiſh*, we ſhall notice, with ſome attention, the judgment of a great and pro-

found ſtateſman—(and almoſt a prophet in what regards the revolution of France)—concerning the reſtoration of that Regal form, which all the ſurrounding governments of Europe cannot but anxiouſly "*deſire*," though they indeed "*make no* "*claim to preſcribe.*"

"What ſupport, or what limitations, the "reſtored MONARCHY muſt have, may be "a doubt, or how it will pitch and ſettle "at laſt: but ONE THING I conceive to be "*far beyond doubt* (ſays this great foreboding "mind) that the ſettlement cannot be *im-*"*mediate*, but that *it muſt be* PRECEDED *by* "SOME SORT OF POWER, *equal at leaſt in* "*vigour, vigilance, promptitude, and deciſion* "*to a* MILITARY GOVERNMENT." *

This is the opinon of him, who traced, by forethought, the germ of the French revolution, through all the ſucceeding periods of its growth, till he foreſaw it ulti-

* *Remarks on the Policy of the Allies with reſpect to France.* Oct. 1793. BURKE.

mately terminate in the Directorial Oligarchy.

" I do not know under what deſcription " to claſs the preſent ruling authority in " France; (ſaid he as early as the year 1790) " It affects to be a pure democracy, though " I think it in a direct train of becoming " ſhortly *a miſchievous and ignoble* OLI- " GARCHY." *

That " *miſchievous and ignoble* OLIGAR- " CHY," at which the revolutionary ſyſtem in France did at length arrive in the due progreſs of its growth, and from whoſe tranſcendant perfidy and inſolence we fruitleſly endeavoured to derive peace to the Chriſtian world; that " OLIGARCHY" has, in its turn, found its fate, and has yielded up its uſurpation to " *a* SORT OF POWER," which appears to be " *equal at leaſt in vigour,* " *vigilance, promptitude, and deciſion to a* MILI- " TARY GOVERNMENT."

Whether we may conſider this " *new*

* *Reflections on the Revolution in France.* BURKE.

"*ſort of* MON-ARCHICAL *power*" as ultimately conducive, either by its latent principles or its probable event, to the re-eſtabliſhment of the ancient MONARCHY of the country, and by that means to a ſecure foundation for peace, is a queſtion from which I altogether abſtain, and which I entirely abandon to the calculations of my reader; being thoroughly ſatisfied of what is more immediately concerning to us,—namely,—that, conſidering the actual circumſtances of the war—the fruitful ſucceſſes of the late campaign—and the complicated advantages under which we are now upon the eve of renewing the conteſt; —conſidering alſo the opportunity for explicit declarations between Great Britain and France, which has been afforded by a recent correſpondence;—and conſidering laſtly, the ſenſible abatement of the revolutionary fervour among the *people* of France ſince the exploſion of the War;—we have made very conſiderable ſtrides towards

the acquiſition of PEACE ſince the failure of the Negotiations at Paris and at Lille; that we are now approaching, by a calculable progreſs, but according to the tardy pace of true wiſdom, to that happy iſſue of the conteſt;—and that, nothing can blaſt, or cauſe us to loſe, our ultimate harveſt of the war, but a factious or puerile intemperance in forcing an immature peace.

And, in ſaying this, I think we ſay every thing that can poſſibly be ſaid upon the ſubject *at preſent*, without ſacrificing fact to ſpeculation, and wiſdom and prudence to prejudice and temerity.

The obſtacles which might ſtand in the way of peace are *two*—the one *common* to all wars; the other entirely *peculiar* to the preſent one.

The *firſt* of theſe obſtacles, is the want of a ſincere and honeſt purpoſe, in one or both of the belligerent parties, to bring hoſtilities to a fair and honourable end.—This is an impediment to peace *common to all wars*.

This impediment however, it will be ſaid, is entirely removed, by the expreſs declaration on the part of the actual executive power in France; and by the ſentiments declared, and well known to exiſt, on the part of the executive authority of this country.

But, allowing to theſe ſeveral parties all the credit for ſincerity of pacific deſire, and honeſty of political dealing, to which they have *reſpectively* entitled themſelves by their public tranſactions before the world—this will not of itſelf ſerve to remove *the other* impediment to peace, which is *peculiar to the preſent war*; and which the two parties, who avow a deſire to contribute to peace, *may not yet have effectually* EMPOWERED THEMSELVES *to remove*. And, as long as this impediment to peace (which is no other than the exiſtence of the ſame extraordinary cauſes whieh occaſioned the preſent war) ſhall continue; and ſhall elude the effectual coercion of the parties who profeſs *a wiſh* to

coerce it; ſo long no reaſonable mind can heſitate to aſſent to the truth of this propoſition—" That no *real* advantage can ariſe, " from any negociation, to the great and " deſirable object of GENERAL PEACE, until " it ſhall *diſtinctly appear*, that thoſe cauſes " have *ceaſed to operate*, which originally " *produced* the war, and by which it has " ſince been *protracted*."

Whenever they who propoſe to unite their powers for producing peace, ſhall be *both willing and able*, really and effectually, to extinguiſh the peculiar cauſes of the preſent war; and to annihilate, as far as it regards the preſent conteſt, thoſe notorious principles and powers, by which we were originally compelled to aſſume, and are ſtill obliged to maintain, a poſture of war; then we may ſafely affirm, that peace will be poſitively within our reach: but, until then, that affirmation cannot be made, without a total ſurrender of our reaſon, or our honeſty, to the partial intereſts of faction.

But, if we cannot reaſonably ſay more, juſt at preſent, in reſpect of peace, than that *it is conſiderably nearer than it was*, we may, nevertheleſs, place the intervening time much to the profit of a future peace, if we will collect and concentrate the fruits of our ſevere experience; and, after taking a general view of ſome main points by which a future peace MUST be determined, if we will further conſider, what particular improvement it may be poſſible to communicate to a ſyſtem of continental peace, that may be able to ſecure and prolong its duration.

It is with this deſign that the preſent crude "FORETHOUGHTS" have been framed; and they are now thrown out into the world, that they may be approved, meliorated, or condemned, accordingly as they may be found calculated, to ſerve or not to ſerve, the important object whoſe intereſts they anxiouſly wiſh to promote.

I.

It requires no powers of deep diſcernment to be able to perceive, very correctly, ſome of the points which MUST be ingredients in any future arrangement of the affairs of Europe, that can, without a groſs abuſe of language, and an inſult to the public reaſon, be denominated PEACE.

I cannot ſuppoſe that there is any level of underſtanding ſo low as not to ſee perfectly, that no real and radical peace can be re-eſtabliſhed in any part of Europe, unleſs it be founded in a GENERAL PEACE. For, ſince at no former period of the world hoſtility ever extended its ravages ſo generally to all countries, and ſo profoundly into the vitals of each; and ſince the principle of hoſtility that has compelled the chief powers of Europe to unite in a ſyſtem of active and vigorous defence, is indiſcriminate and unintermitting in its operation; it becomes morally demonſtrated, that no arrangement *can* acquire the nature of *peace*,

until the hoſtile principle be ſubdued and incapacitated; and, until thoſe countries which now participate in the evil of general war, concur in extinguiſhing its cauſe, and in bringing that common calamity to a poſitive end. And the concurrence of all parties in bringing about this end, is, in fact, no other, than the eſtabliſhing a GENERAL PEACE.

Now, it muſt be plain to all who are competent to look forward and to judge of theſe matters, that the GENERAL PEACE which is to terminate the preſent tremendous conflict, and to cauſe the univerſal agitations of Europe to ſettle into a ſtate of tranquillity and repoſe, MUST conſtitute a criſis in no reſpect leſs, in ſome reſpects more, important, than the famous *Peace of Weſtphalia* in the middle of the laſt century; when, after a courſe of general and ſanguinary war during thirty years, inſtigated chiefly by the conflicts of opinion, Europe recovered at laſt from her diſorder, and found her repoſe in an arrangement of

peace. By which arrangement, however, her internal circumſtances were eſſentially altered, a new complexion was given to European ſociety, and a new political baſe was eſtabliſhed;—upon which baſe all the particular intereſts of the Powers of Europe continued to repoſe, when the convulſions of the preſent war occaſioned a radical breach and diſruption of the whole.

The termination of the preſent war, therefore, and the arrangements of GENERAL PEACE which will give it termination, MUST neceſſarily be attended with a poſitive reparation of THE BASE upon which the public ſyſtem of Europe is to ſtand; either by reuniting parts violently ſevered, or by forming freſh combinations of thoſe parts which demand new relations.—THE FABRIC OF EUROPE MUST BE RELAID IN ITS BASE;—and any attempt to repair the fabric, without beginning the work at the foundation, MUST be conſidered as an inconteſtible

proof of a want, either of ſkill, or of probity, in the architects who undertake it.

But, ſuppoſing the full period of maturity to be actually arrived; and politicians, wanting neither in ſkill nor in probity, appointed to the labour; and ſuppoſing all the parties who are intereſted in the conteſt to be able to add to a *ſincere and fair purpoſe*, *a poſitive and effectual power* of vanquiſhing THE CAUSES OF THE WAR, and to begin to co-operate, by an union of all their energies, in providing a condition of GENERAL PEACE;—it is eaſy to foreſee, that, ſince a *common intereſt of nations* has been fundamentally aſſailed and endangered by the principle of the preſent war, and in a manner *perfectly novel*, ſo the vindication and defence of that common intereſt MUST become a leading object to determine the common concern.

And (I repeat) it is indiſpenſible to our ſpeculation to ſuppoſe, firſt of all, that the parties aſſembled as the PACIFICATORS OF

EUROPE, and compoſing an organ for producing a general act of the contracting parties, ſhall bring with them on behalf of their principals a ſincere and honeſt purpoſe to bring the war abſolutely to an end; —that they ſhall make "*a fixed determi-*" *nation not to ſeparate till they ſhall have* "*given full effect to peace*," the paramount rule of all their proceedings:—and, for that purpoſe, that they ſhall concur in wiſdom, in juſtice, in moderation, and in ſincerity. Without which ſuppoſition, it is vain to ſpeculate on the iſſue of any negociation, profeſſing to have *peace* for its ruling object.

But, if ſuch a motive *really* govern the Congreſs in *all* its members, then the great common intereſt of European nations, which has ſuffered ſo radically in the preſent conteſt, cannot fail to be both thoroughly ſcrutinized and effectually ſecured.

It is very manifeſt, WHAT *common concern of European nations* it is that has ſuffered ſo

ſeverely from the ſcourge of the preſent war, and the cauſes which have provoked it.

" EUROPE" (ſays a writer of high and juſt repute on theſe ſubjects) " forms *a po-*
" *litical ſyſtem, an integral body*, where the
" whole is connected by the relations, and
" different intereſts, of the nations inhabiting
"this part of the world." *

" The particular ſituation of Europe," (ſays an eloquent and celebrated writer,) " more equally peopled, more equal-
" ly fertile, and better connected in all
" its parts (than the other quarters of the
" globe); the conſtant mixture of intereſts,
" which the ties of blood and the tranſ-
" actions of commerce have eſtabliſhed be-
" tween ſovereigns; the multitude of rivers
" and their various directions, by means of
" which intercourſe is ſo generally facilita-
" ted; the unſettled diſpoſitions of its inha-
" bitants, which prompt them mutually to
" viſit each others countries; the invention

* VATTEL.

" of printing, and the univerſal taſte for " literature, which have eſtabliſhed among " them a community of purſuits and of " knowledge; laſtly, the number and ſmall- " neſs of the particular ſtates, which, joined " to the demands of luxury, and the differ- " ences of climate, render them all recipro- " cally neceſſary to each other; all theſe " cauſes combined have rendered Europe " (not only as Aſia and Africa, an ideal col- " lection of people who have nothing in " common but a name) but a REAL SO- " CIETY, having the ſame religion, the ſame " manners, the ſame cuſtoms, and even the " ſame laws; *from which* NO ONE *of the* " *nations that compoſe it* CAN DEPART, *with-* " *out inſtantly* THROWING IT INTO DISOR- " DER."—" Une *ſociété réelle*, qui a ſa reli- " gion, ſes mœurs, ſes coutumes et même ſes " loix; *dont* AUCUN *des peuples qui la compo-* " *ſent ne peut s'écarter* SANS CAUSER AUSSI- " TÔT DES TROUBLES." *

* ROUSSEAU.

As this complex body conſiſts only by the collocation and correſpondence of its parts, its permanency and ſecurity muſt depend wholly upon the ſecurity of the parts of which it conſiſts; and whatever is of a nature to impair thoſe parts eſſentially —or is qualified to afford them ſecurity and health—becomes immediately an object of COMMON CONCERN, either to *reſiſt* or to *promote*.

But if there ſhould exiſt an evil of a nature to aſſail, at once, with ſecret but intenſe activity, and without diſcrimination or exception, the vital principles of *all* and *each* thoſe parts;—an evil whoſe action and eſſence is unalterably hoſtile to their very EXISTENCE; and which acts as a diſſolvent of the moſt obſtinate and corroſive quality, upon the *primary elements* of which all thoſe parts conſiſt—then, reſiſtance to that evil, as the only poſſible means of ſecuring the great, common, paramount intereſt of NA-

TIONAL EXISTENCE, muſt become the firſt object of the common concern.

We need not ſearch far to find ſuch an evil as is here deſcribed. Experience, dearly purchaſed during a few years, has brought us to the intimate knowledge both of its exiſtence and of its capacities; and has fully revealed to us, that there REALLY DOES EXIST AN EVIL—(againſt which, indeed, we have hitherto, under God's providence, defended our country with perfect ſucceſs BY MEANS OF WAR)—which is, and which ever muſt continue to be, unleſs reduced to a ſtate of abſolute impotency, hoſtile to the exiſtence of all eſtabliſhed ſtates, by its peculiar and ſcarcely coercible POWER OF DISSOLVING EVERY BOND OF MORAL OR CIVIL SOCIETY.

Now, as it is ſcarcely poſſible to ſuppoſe any perſon ſo abſurd as to take meaſures for the improvement of his exiſtence, without firſt of all concerning himſelf with the means for defending and ſecuring the exiſtence he

would improve againſt a danger impending over it; ſo we may be aſſured, that thoſe who ſhall be judged competent for the great work of improving by peace the circumſtances of national exiſtence in Europe, and who are, at the ſame time, perfectly aware of the death-blow levelled at, and ſtill impending over, the national exiſtence of the ſeveral European ſtates, will be inſtructed firſt of all, to repair with the trueſt concert the *foundations* on which *that exiſtence ultimately depends*; and to raiſe the ſtrongeſt bulwarks to guard it againſt thoſe hoſtile principles, which MUST acquire infinite facilities for acting, whenever the powerful DEFENCES OF WAR ſhall be taken away.

As no increaſe of evidence can enforce, ſo no effort of ſophiſtry can enfeeble the proof of experience, that the *true cauſe* of all the convulſions which it is propoſed to allay, of all the feuds which it is intended to compoſe by means of peace, is no other

than the conflict, occaſioned by the action of the NEW *principles of* DISSOLUTION contending againſt the ANCIENT *principle of* COHESION, by which men have been aggregated into particular ſocieties. And, as theſe particular ſocieties are the elements that compoſe the great collective ſociety of Europe, the members of that collective ſociety muſt be ſenſible of the neceſſity of admitting as a common, univerſal, and immutable maxim of their public law, that the ſecurity of the *fundamentals of* CIVIL SOCIETY (that is to ſay—of ſocieties of individual men) is the only ultimate principle upon which NATIONAL SOCIETY (that is to ſay—the ſocial correſpondence and union between ſtates) can poſſibly depend for its ſupport. And, if it be of importance to the political intereſts of Europe, that its particular ſtates ſhould form a ſyſtem of general confociation, bound together in all its parts by thoſe paramount rules which conſtitute the public law of

Europe, it is manifeſt, that it is of principal neceſſity that theſe conſtituent ſtates be themſelves thoroughly defended and ſecured by common concert, againſt all cauſes tending immediately to their decompoſition and decay.

The *principles of diſſolution*, which act ſo fatally upon all the conſtituent ſtates of the great political body of Europe, and by neceſſary conſequence upon the great body itſelf, become therefore the *firſt* object that MUST engage the attention of any Congreſs, *ſeriouſly* aſſembled for the work of GENERAL PACIFICATION;—and no SOLID GENERAL PEACE can poſſibly have exiſtence, until thoſe principles are coerced and bound up by ſome grand federal act.

A common and vigorous concert of all powers againſt thoſe cauſes of common danger, muſt therefore become a fundamental point of the law of nations, under the REVISION OF THAT LAW which the times ſo imperiouſly demand, and for which

the criſis of a future negociation will furniſh SO FIT AND ADEQUATE AN OCCASION.

But, if the *mere exiſtence* of thoſe principles within ſtates becomes thus an object of univerſal and united concern, from its eſſential enmity to the exiſtence of thoſe ſtates, what muſt be ſaid of the event of any one of thoſe ſtates being ſo far infected by them, as to have contributed to their force the artificial powers of its own government? In this caſe, the principles, eſſentially hoſtile in themſelves, acquire the moſt powerful means for giving extended and public effect to their pernicious energies.

It is manifeſt, that if the principles themſelves *muſt* ever be hoſtile to the united powers of Europe, any ſtate ſo far infected by them muſt be tranſlated into a condition of poſitive hoſtility againſt all the other powers, and into a ſtate of direct oppoſition to the great law of national ſociety under which they are all united.

"The laws of natural ſociety are of "ſuch importance to the ſafety of all ſtates" (ſays an eminent authority) "that if the "cuſtom once prevailed of trampling them "under foot, NO NATION could flatter her-"ſelf with the hope of preſerving her "NATIONAL EXISTENCE, and enjoying do-"meſtic tranquillity, however, attentive to "purſue every meaſure dictated by the moſt "conſummate prudence, juſtice, and mo-"deration. Now all men and all ſtates "have a perfect right to thoſe things that "are *neceſſary for their preſervation*; ſince "that right correſponds to an indiſpenſable "obligation. All nations have therefore a "right to reſort to forcible means for the "purpoſe of repreſſing any one particular "nation who openly violates the laws of "the ſociety which nature has eſtabliſhed "between them, or who directly attacks "the welfare and ſafety of that ſociety."*

Now, if it be not poſſible for the ſeveral

* VATTEL. Prelimin. § 22.

powers of Europe to pledge themſelves for the abſolute *non-exiſtence* of thoſe principles within their reſpective territories, it is not only poſſible, but, whenever it is pretended to make A PEACE, it is of a neceſſity moſt abſolute and indiſpenſable, that ALL the Contracting Parties, without the exception of *one*, ſhould fully and unequivocally pronounce a common ſentence of reprobation againſt them; and bind themſelves, by a common act, to maintain the *common ſecurity* againſt thoſe ſources of *common danger*;—and that they ſhould formally lay down, as fundamental principles both of the *preſent* peace and of the law of nations *in future*;—That ALL CAUSES, deſtructive of the *texture* of civil ſociety by which the ſeveral ſtates conſiſt, are, by the nature of things, deſtructive alſo of the great collective intereſt of the ſtates of Europe, and of the law of nations by which thoſe ſtates are mutually bound;—that, therefore, the coercion of thoſe cauſes, within the different

ſtates, muſt be no leſs an object of the common than of particular concern; as involving the *foundations* of the common ſafety and proſperity, and affecting the only principles by which that common ſafety can be radically inſured;—and, that any ſtate, in which thoſe cauſes may eventually have acquired ſo great an aſcendancy as to command and direct the artificial powers of the government, is *ipſo facto* rendered poſitively hoſtile to all the other powers—an enemy, virtually declared, to the law of nations—and a true and practical infringer of the peace.

And here will be afforded a ſimple and infallible teſt, to try the *ſincerity* of the ſeveral parties who may profeſs a *deſire* for peace, and who may go through the preliminary pageant with an artifice eluding all detection. For if, when the diſtempered ſyſtem of Europe ſhall be actually laid bare to the firſt principles and moſt ſecret cauſes of its diſorder; and when the means of re-

ſtoring and of ſecuring to it health ſhall be found to be obvious, eaſy, and indiſputable—if then, *any* of the parties ſhould refuſe to concur in eſtabliſhing the common welfare, or ſhould in any manner or degree endeavour to counteract it, or in ſhort do any thing but cheerfully and cordially cooperate in adminiſtering the undoubted means of health; then, it will be morally demonſtrated, that ſuch party is *not ſincere* in his profeſſions of pacific deſires: but is only anxious to over-reach and circumvent the other parties by a dark and nefarious policy, in order to prevent the final and remedileſs extinction of the ſeeds of war; and to provide ſome unſuſpected corner, in which the embers may be kept alive, and ſecretly fed, in proſpect of a future conflagration at a more convenient period, when leſs oppoſition ſhall be preſented to the flames.

Whatever difficulty there might be in calling npon the ſeveral powers to give

a common aſſent to ſuch fundamental principles as theſe, if no particular occaſion for doing ſo preſented itſelf, there will exiſt none at all at *the ſumming up of the preſent war*:—For all theſe important topics MUST then be brought forward, openly and unreſervedly, upon the carpet; and full and ſatisfactory explanations MUST be afforded upon all points, in which nations may ſuſpect the future ſafety of their political exiſtence to be in any manner or degree concerned. Nor is the countenance of delicacy, or of tenderneſs, which the hypocriſy of faction will then aſſume with its wonted cunning, to make Europe cloſe its eyes againſt its own danger, or withhold the organ of its public utterance from expreſſing every anxiety that may be inſpired by its natural right to the care of ſelf-preſervation. It is held, indeed, in regard of *ordinary* occaſions of war, that in a convention for peace "no deciſion is pronounced "on the *original cauſe* of war." This, how-

ever, is a civility, or a policy, that only reſpects the ordinary interruptions of peace, produced by the colliſion of intereſts between two powers. But it would be the height of abſurdity, to ſuppoſe, in a criſis ſo perfectly new, and without any example in experience; and when, for the firſt time in the world, a univerſal war has been occaſioned by a direct and general attack upon the ſocial principle by which all ſtates conſiſt; that Europe will condeſcend to ſquare itſelf to any rule of etiquette, preſcribed by any maſter of the ceremonies of faction. It is not the dumb ſhew of diſapprobation, a negative grimace, or a *hauſſement d'épaules*, that can afford to Europe, at the eventful criſis of a peace, an adequate ſecurity that all thoſe principles are effectually ſtripped of power, which have convulſed and ſhattered its foundations; nothing leſs can conſtitute ſuch a pledge, than a diſtinct, pointed, and categorical declaration on the part of ALL the contracting parties; and a moſt ſolemn

federal act of nations, engaging all parties to maintain, in their full vigour, the fundamental principles ſo expreſly declared and laid down.

Whenever, therefore, a negociation for a REAL PEACE ſhall be commenced, its ground muſt be laid with a determined and rigorous attention to theſe radical points; and it will be impoſſible for that peace to be conſtructed with any pretenſions to ſolidity or permanency, unleſs theſe, or *ſome ſuch* principles, conſtitute its baſe. But, if the parties are *really ſincere*, and act *really* by principles of common wiſdom and common intereſt, they will not heſitate to eſtabliſh the renewal of peace upon ſome ſuch foundation.

But, it ſeems, we are to ſuppoſe that the parties *are* all ſincere.

We are, therefore, to ſuppoſe, that they will readily diſclaim and reprobate all thoſe principles of diſorder;—that they will all be heartily diſpoſed to unite in vigorous

defence of the legitimate groundworks of civil ſociety—of the moral bonds by which it is held together—and of the eſtabliſhed authorities by which its laws are ſeverely adminiſtered;—and that France, in particular, will be ſenſible, that ſhe owes to the tranquillity of all other countries, and to her own honour, to proclaim her deteſtation of all thoſe particular horrors which have emanated from within herſelf. We may then ſuppoſe alſo, that MUTUAL RESPECT will be reſtored between all public authorities; and the doctrine of, the impoſſibility of co-exiſtence between governments, be aboliſhed by a voice of common execration.

Further, we may plainly perceive, that the juſt and ancient principle of *equality of rights* among nations, MUST be reinforced by common aſſent.

It is curious to obſerve, in many inſtances, how completely the revolutionary ſpirit in France inverted all order, both of thought

and practice. But there is no inſtance of inverſion more curious than that which regards the abſolute and relative characters of nations. All writers upon political ſubjects, previous to the French revolution, when treating of the ſeveral monarchies, principalities, and ſtates, that occupy the continent of Europe, and tracing the numerous relations by which they are all compacted into one great body, have unanimouſly agreed in calling that body *the* REPUBLIC *of Europe:* intimating by the phraſe, that in that great ſociety of nations, all ſtood *equal*, and upon the *ſame level*.—France, on the contrary, though claiming equality for all mankind; and paſſing, without mercy, ſentence of democracy on each; yet erected Europe into *a* MONARCHY, and aſſerted in favour of France, a SOVEREIGN LEVEL above all the other powers.

Of this we have had a variety of proofs during the progreſs of the war; but the moſt memorable example of all was af-

forded, when it firſt opened its ſyſtem of inſolence againſt the Imperial Court of Vienna; and, in the name of THE *Great Nation*, claimed, as the ſyſtem it had reſolved to adopt in all countries, a diſtrict to be attached to the Ambaſſador repreſenting THE *Great Nation*; which diſtrict was to be excepted from the operation of the municipal laws, and to be ſubjected excluſively to the authority of the Ambaſſador himſelf. And it demanded further, that all ſubjects of THE *Great Nation*, inhabiting foreign countries, ſhould be ſecured from all poſſible operation of the laws of thoſe countries, and be amenable only to the AMBASSADORIAL TRIBUNAL. So that, if the immenſe power of France at that period, ſeconded by her advocates in England and other countries, had been able to eſtabliſh a peace upon the grounds ſhe had then determined; and if we, in this country, had had the inſolence or temerity to put our laws in force againſt a French pick-pocket or ſwindler, (an

event highly probable to have happened) we ſhould have been held forth as invading the *rights* of THE *Great Nation*, emanating from its own eſſential greatneſs; as infringing the law of nature in that particular clauſe in which ſhe exalts THE *Great Nation* to be the paramount nation of the earth; as inflicting the ſoreſt wound on the honour and dignity of THE *Great Nation*;—and, as having broken, by an evil and turbulent policy, the bonds of peace by which we before were happily allied to that exhauſtleſs fountain of the love of peace, the government of THE *Great Nation*.

The cells of Bedlam and Bicêtre would be abſolutely unequal to the production of an inſtance of inſanity ſo extravagant and yet ſo connected, as that diſplayed (for the indignation of the preſent age, but for the mirth of poſterity) in the perſon of CITIZEN GENERAL BERNADOTTE, the fit and

faithful repreſentative of THE *Great Nation.* —Surely, then, we are authoriſed in aſſerting, that if ever peace is really brought about by the concert and *pacific propenſities* of *all* nations, nothing ſo inſane can poſſibly make any part of the projected terms of that peace.

But if the parties who are to negotiate for peace ſhould be once ſo ſincerely in earneſt, as to join ſeriouſly in eſtabliſhing thoſe fundamentals——if common principles be admitted, without reſervation, by ALL, and meaſures of concert eſtabliſhed for their defence;—then, it is evident that we may conſider the negociation as ACTUALLY BEGUN; and that we may look forward, with reaſonable proſpects of hope, to its conduct and termination.

The next object to which the attention of the pacificators MUST of courſe be directed will be, the particular terms of the peace; that is to ſay, the details of the arrangement that is ultimately to be made by

the different powers, in order to the removing all grounds of enmity and diſſention between parties, who profeſs a *ſincere* deſire to revive and maintain relations of amity and peace. This is a point involving the particular intereſts of the parties, ſince it regards retroceſſions from conqueſt, and ſacrifices to be made on all ſides, in order to obtain what is acknowledged to be a ſuperior good, namely, a ſtate of political tranquillity and reſt.

Now, we can eaſily perceive, that it MUST be eſteemed reaſonable and juſt by the negociators, to require, that the firſt proof of a fixed, reflective purpoſe of peace, ſhould be given by *that power*, which, poſſeſſing always the moſt important territory in point of ſituation, abſolute and relative, has, at the ſame time, by the fortunes of the war, obtained poſſeſſion of *that territory* alſo, on which it principally depends to fix or overturn the counterpoiſe of Europe.

" France (ſays a great writer) by its

" MERE GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION, inde-
" pendently of every other circumſtance,
" MUST affect *every* ſtate of Europe; ſome
" of them immediately, all of them through
" mediums not very remote."*

Impreſſed with the force of the ſame manifeſt truth, I ventured, upon a former occaſion, to aſſert—" That at all times the
" CENTRICAL POSITION of France *alone*, by
" means of which ſhe is able to put in
" motion her powerful armies towards every
" part of the continent—whilſt her prodi-
" digious extent of ſea coaſt, and her ma-
" ritime opportunities, are ſufficient to keep
" alive the whole jealouſy of the navy of
" Great Britain;---that this CENTRICAL
" POSITION ALONE, which ſhe muſt ever EX-
" CLUSIVELY POSSESS---more than doubles
" the importance of every part of her
" territory."

Such, in a few words, is the true de

* *Heads for Conſideration on the preſent State of Affairs.* Nov. 1792. BURKE.

ſcription of the ſituation of FRANCE, both abſolute and relative; and from this repreſentation we can pronounce, ſafely and with deciſion, that there is no other nation in Europe that occupies a territory of equal importance.

Now, to this territory the fortune of the war has annexed ALL THE BELGIC PROVINCES; by means of which, the northern frontier of France is advanced into contact with that of Holland.

By thus occupying the NETHERLANDS, France is not merely miſtreſs of a certain additional number of ſquare leagues; but ſhe is alſo enabled to uſe to her own purpoſes the whole of the United Provinces; to occupy them by her armies, to extend her power northward almoſt to the Baltic, and to interſect all channels of direct communication between Great Britain and the other leading powers of Europe. By means of this territory, the entire weſtern coaſt of Europe preſents an *unbroken line* of

FRENCH FRONTIER between Great Britain and all the Continental Powers, extending, in point of *effect*, from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Elbe.

It requires only common ſenſe and reflection, and that ſpirit of *ſincerity* which we are taught to look for on the part of the pacificators, in order to perceive and *to confeſs*—that this prepoſterous aggrandiſement of the natural importance of the territory of France, conſtitutes ſo enormous a preponderance againſt all the other ſtates, as to render her, as long as ſhe continues to retain it, the ſovereign arbitreſs of the tranquillity or diſquiet of Chriſtendom.

Such is the *relative value* of the ſituation of the Netherlands to Europe, conſidered as a political ſyſtem of independent powers united by common intereſts, and mutually neceſſary for the ſecurity of each other. For "the true political importance of "Flanders in reſpect of Europe has *hi-* "*therto* been, neither its ſoil, nor its po-

" pulation, but its connexion with the " Houſe of Auſtria; which has rendered " it a *theatre* on which the *whole force* " of that powerful and illuſtrious Houſe " might occaſionally be *transferred*; thus " oppoſing to France a formidable BAR- " RIER on the *North*."

By the annihilation of that BARRIER, Holland and all its reſources are brought to the feet of France; and the whole North of Europe on this ſide is laid open to her influence or power.

Such then being the actual ſtate of things, and France, while ſhe " *poſſeſſes* ALWAYS " *the moſt important territory in Europe, in* " *point of ſituation, having alſo, by the for-* " *tune of the war, acquired dominion over* " THAT OTHER TERRITORY, *on which it* " PRINCIPALLY *depends to* FIX *or* OVERTURN " *the* COUNTERPOISE *of Europe*;"—it is manifeſt, that it will be moſt juſt and reaſonable in the negociators for Peace to require from France, as the firſt proof of *a*

fixed and reflective purpoſe of giving effect to peace, the relinquiſhment of the Auſtrian Netherlands; to be afterwards applied as, by the conſent of the Congreſs, may be finally determined.

What may be the deſtiny of the Netherlands thus recovered from France—whether they will be re-annexed to the Houſe of Auſtria, or be ingrafted upon ſome other ſtate, is an inquiry foreign to the purpoſe of theſe ſpeculations; and I humbly conceive, that it is not very important to the intereſts of Europe and the balance of power, provided they be inſerted into the trunk of ſome great and *ſubſtantive* power, capable of reviving and maintaining A BARRIER ſufficiently ſtrong to ſkreen Holland from the influence of France, and to cover the North of Europe from French aggreſſion.

Should this firſt difficulty be removed by the conſent of France, as a pledge of the ſincerity of her profeſſions, there can then be no doubt but that *the ſequel* of the

negociation will proceed with extreme harmony and eaſe; and will enſure, by every ſtep of its progreſs, the proſpect of REAL PEACE. Juſt and honourable retroceſſions will then be determined on, and agreed to, without difficulty, on all ſides;—the relations of power, in the great balance of Europe, will be amicably adjuſted;—and the acrimony and bitterneſs, which jealouſy and miſtruſt now occaſion, will then be exchanged for mutual confidence and reciprocal good-will.

It would be ſuperfluous and preſumptuous to remark, that, in order to give full perfection to the peace thus pending, the negociators would proceed with the utmoſt warineſs and deliberation—not ſparing the time neceſſary for the moſt mature reflection—and exerciſing every power of forethought, to obviate or guard againſt the poſſibility of any *contingent cauſes of war, that might iſſue out of the* VERY TERMS *of the* GENERAL PEACE.

We have now conſidered, with ſome attention, TWO important points, which MUST become principal ingredients, the one in the *foundation*, the other in the *ſuperſtructure*, of the edifice of PEACE, whenever the architects are able to engage in the work. It is not my deſign to examine any others; ſince *theſe two alone* are fully ſufficient, by ſhewing us *what* MUST *be done*, before we *can* have any REAL PEACE; to enable us to judge *how near* that event is, and what we MUST, firſt of all, poſitively effect, before we can reaſonably hope to obtain it; and alſo, to make us thoroughly ſenſible that it behoves us—not to let our time waſte away in fruitleſs diſſentions, but—with good ſenſe and a manly ſpirit, to exert ourſelves vigorouſly in purſuing the only courſe by which we can hope to arrive at ſuch a ſtate of things, as a truly wiſe man, and a real friend to his country or mankind, would wiſh to ſee eſtabliſhed.

II.

But, if the ſpirit of moderation, juſtice, and ſincerity above deſcribed, favoured by concurring circumſtances, ſhould direct the members of the Congreſs invariably in their deliberations concerning peace,—PEACE will unqueſtionably reſult.

It ſhould ſeem, however, that we ſhould be but moderate gainers, and ſhould only build up to throw down again, if, after ſo tremendous a war, and ſuch unexampled efforts to compel it to a termination, the PEACE we ſhould have acquired with ſo much difficulty and labour were to be left expoſed to the effect of all the ancient ſyſtem of intrigue and ambition; eſpecially, when ſo new and ſo active a ſpirit as that againſt which we are contending, is alive in the world, and will be ever ready, openly or covertly, to act as an auxiliary to any party, inclined to replunge Europe into war and blood.

It is this jealouſy of fore-thought that has ſuggeſted, that *ſomething more* is want-

ing to the political ſyſtem of Europe, beſides the *formal ſignature* of a peace, in order to raiſe an efficient barrier againſt the cuſtomary interruptions of the common tranquillity; and, by ſome *ſcheme of concert*, to render it leſs eaſy for ambition and intrigue to give effect to their intereſted ſpeculations, at the expenſe of ſo much common miſery, and ſo prodigal an effuſion of human blood.

In order to be able to diſcover by *what means* ſuch a meaſure may be accompliſhed, we have only (I think) to conſider with attention, what the real condition of Europe is, in its parts and in its totality.

"Europe" (ſays a celebrated writer, to whom I have already more than once had occaſion to reſort,) "forms a POLITICAL "SYSTEM, AN INTEGRAL BODY, where "THE WHOLE IS CONNECTED by the rela- "tions, and different intereſts, of the na- "tions inhabiting this part of the world. "It is not, as anciently, *a confuſed heap of*

" *detached pieces*, each of which thought " itſelf very little concerned in the fate of " others, and ſeldom regarded things which " did not immediately concern it. The " continual attention of ſovereigns to what " is on the carpet, the conſtant reſidence " of Miniſters, and the perpetual negocia- " tions, make of modern Europe *a kind of* " REPUBLIC, the members of which, *each* " *independent*, but *all linked together by the* " *ties of common intereſt*, UNITE *for the main-* " *tenance of order and liberty*. Hence aroſe " that famous ſcheme of the political ba- " lance, or the equilibrium of power; by " which is underſtood ſuch a diſpoſition of " things, as that no one potentate is able " abſolutely to predominate, or to preſcribe " laws to the others." *

Such is indeed the real ſtate, or conſtitution, of Europe. But this very deſcription, by drawing our attention to the internal principle by which the ſociety of European

* VATTEL, Book III. § 47.

nations are urged to concert and union, ſeems to point out to us, both, *where* the preſent ſyſtem *is deficient*—and *how* that deficiency *may be ſupplied*.—We plainly ſee, how natural cauſes, of certain and inevitable operation, have gradually advanced the ſtates of Europe from being "*a* CONFUSED HEAP OF DETACHED PIECES, *each of* "*which thought itſelf very little concerned in* "*the fate of others, and very ſeldom regarded* "*things which did not immediately concern it,*" to be "A POLITICAL SYSTEM, AN INTE-"GRAL BODY, *where* THE WHOLE IS CON-"NECTED *by the relations, and different in-*"*tereſts, of the nations inhabiting this part of* "*the world.*"

Here we detect the principles that work in the great body of Europe; and we diſcern the great ſcope and butt of their bearing to be, a ſtate of CONSOCIATION and SYSTEMATIC UNION of all the elements that compoſe it.—Nature points out to us *the object* to which the common intereſt of

Europe *tends*; it remains for us, as wiſe political phyſicians, to contribute our beſt abilities for promoting that tendency, and accelerating its arrival at its *natural term.*

That partial union, which we hitherto owe to the mere effects of natural principles, admits of much perfection. If, therefore, UNION be their ſcope, it is for us to give to the ſyſtem of Europe CONCERTED UNION and CONCENTRATION. If the parts ſtrive mutually for correſpondence, it is for us to render the correſpondence SIMPLE and DIRECT, inſtead of INTRICATE and CIRCUITOUS. It for us to apply the force of human wiſdom and of human power to COMPLETE the work, of which nature has given us ſo diſtinct a ſcheme, and which ſhe herſelf has brought ſo nearly to perfection.

That all the member-ſtates of Europe are comprehended in a common intereſt, cannot be controverted:—it is this common intereſt that has produced, as by accident, the tiſſue of correſpondences, croſ-

ſing one another in all directions, which connects them all. But, though there be a *common intereſt*, and though all parties are aware of the neceſſity of defending it, and even on particular occaſions of concerting meaſures for its defence, yet is there NO COMMON CENTRE—NO FOCUS—where they might all *feel their union*; and in which all their relations might be made *locally* to converge.

"We know that the perfection of a "thing (ſays the profound Vattel) conſiſts, "generally, in the *perfect agreement* of all "its *conſtituent parts* to tend to the ſame "end." * But in the great European ſyſtem, the "conſtituent parts" remain ſtill in a ſtate of very *imperfect agreement*, with regard to their concurrence to "the ſame end."

"Since the object of the natural ſociety "eſtabliſhed between all mankind, is that "they ſhould lend each other mutual "aſſiſtance, in order to attain perfection

* B. I. §. 14.

" themſelves, and to render their condition
" as perfect as poſſible.—And ſince NA-
" TIONS, conſidered as ſo many free perſons
" living together in a ſtate of nature, are
" bound to cultivate human ſociety with
" each other,—the object of THE GREAT
" SOCIETY, eſtabliſhed by nature between
" ALL NATIONS, is alſo the interchange of
" mutual aſſiſtance for their own improve-
" ment and that of their condition."

" The FIRST GENERAL LAW that we diſ-
" cover in the very object of the SOCIETY
" OF NATIONS, is, that each individual
" nation is bound to contribute every thing
" in her power to the happineſs and perfec-
" tion of all the others." *

This principle acting in the ſtates of Europe,—all of which are exalted by the common influence of Chriſtianity to a peculiar condition of intellectual and moral eminence above their neighbours—has united with the community of intereſts, to determine the public law of nations in Eu-

* Prelimin. § 12, 13.

rope; and to preſcribe, as the paramount rule of their general politics, "that famous ſcheme of the POLITICAL BALANCE "or the equilibrium of power; by which is "underſtood ſuch a diſpoſition of things, "as that no one nation be able abſolutely to predominate, and preſcribe laws to "the others." *

Now, is it not to be lamented, that although all the nations of Europe have *perpetually* the ſame duties, the ſame intereſts, and the ſame rights;---and although they form *perpetually* one great body of ſociety; yet that they ſhould have no one *perpetual* ſeat of union, or point of reference—no one *permanent organ* to collect the general ſenſe, or to expreſs the general will? All their channels of intercourſe are independent, private, and multiplex; and it very rarely happens that they inſtitute ONE COMMON ORGAN, to deliberate or to decide upon their common concerns.

It is in contemplating Europe under this

* Ib. Book III. § 47.

impreſſion, that I feel myſelf forcibly led to the opinion that the good which we are ſenſible is wanting might be obtained—the inconvenience of which we complain might be remedied—and the perfection, at which it aims, might be communicated to the political ſyſtem of Europe, if, when peace ſhall be re-eſtabliſhed, and *upon grounds as cautiouſly and ſolidly laid as thoſe which have been here ſuppoſed*, the Congreſs, by whoſe offices that peace ſhall be effected, were to be rendered permanent; and if it were to become for ever a part of the DIPLOMATIC SYSTEM, that, in ſome convenient and central part of Europe, a public miniſter from every ſtate ſhould reſide, conſtituting a PERMANENT CONGRESS, and furniſhing a common centre and public organ to the GREAT SOCIETY OF NATIONS.

" It is (evidently) *neceſſary* that nations " ſhould treat and *hold intercourſe* together, " in order to promote their intereſts—to " avoid injuring each other—and to adjuſt " and terminate their diſputes."

" The *only expedient* is, to communicate " by the agency of procurators or manda- " tories,—of delegates charged with their " commands, and veſted with their powers " —that is ſay, *public miniſters*."

" Every ſovereign ſtate has a right to " ſend and to receive public miniſters; for " they are *neceſſary inſtruments* in the ma- " nagement of thoſe affairs which ſove- " reigns have with each other, and the " *channels of that correſpondence* which they " have a right to carry on." *

" CONGRESSES are aſſemblies of Plenipo- " tentiaries."

" To afford a proſpect of a happy " iſſue of their deliberations, ſuch meet- " ings ſhould be formed and directed by a ſin- " cere deſire of peace and concord." ‡

Now, ſince we have ſeen that the collection of European ſtates are moulded by natural cauſes into *a true ſocial ſyſtem*—that they have a common intereſt, and acknowledge a common law; ſince we have

* VATTEL, book IV. § 55, 56, 57. ‡ *Ib.* II. § 330.

ſeen that they find it therefore neceſſary to open channels of intercourſe with each other; and for that end to appoint public miniſters at every ſeparate ſeat of government; and that, upon ſome extraordinary occaſions, when the intereſts of the "INTE-"GRAL BODY" are generally affected, they are led, by principles of manifeſt convenience, to conſtitute *temporary aſſemblies* of public miniſters called CONGRESSES, in order to deliberate upon and conduct thoſe intereſts; —the reaſon of the caſe ſeems diſtinctly to preſcribe to us, *to give extenſion and permanency to the ſyſtem actually prevailing*; and to eſtabliſh, as a part of the Public Law, in ſome central ſituation, a PERMANENT CONGRESS—" formed and directed by the " ſame ſincere deſire of peace and concord, " by which THE GENERAL PEACE muſt be " concluded."

The advantages which ſuch a CONGRESS would be able to afford to the community of Europe, appear to be almoſt too manifeſt to require ſpecification. I ſhall however ex-

preſs them ſummarily in the order in which they ſuggeſt themſelves to my conception.

It would furniſh *a centre of union* to the independent members that compoſe the great complex ſyſtem of Europe.

It would afford a *focus*, or fixed medium, for the concentration of their common energies.

It would create a *ſtation*, in which a concentrated political view might at all moments be taken of the true ſtate of the European world.

It would eſtabliſh that which is of all things chiefly to be deſired, namely, A MIDDLE TERM, between the ſecret intrigues of cabinets, and the open and calamitous rupture of war.

It would give exiſtence to a *permanent and ſtationary organ*, through which peace might at all times be *promptly* reſtored, ſhould it have been found impracticable to adjuſt the differences between two powers, and to prevent their having recourſe to open and active hoſtilities.

Were ſuch a ſyſtem incorporated into the public law of Europe, by the conſent of the member-ſtates, at the concluſion of the preſent war, I cannot but conceive, that it would communicate ſomething like perfection to the plan which nature is now ſtriving to effect by the concurrent tendencies of ſecond cauſes;—that it would fortify intenſely the means of defending the common intereſt;—and that it would ever oppoſe a powerful impediment to the recurrence of war, thereby prolonging neceſſarily the duration and the bleſſings of peace.

Nor can any one with juſtice or reaſon charge this ſuggeſtion with being *ſpeculative*. A ſpeculative principle is that which, originating in ſpeculation and conjectural calculations, aſpires to guide and to command practice. But that is no ſpeculative principle which endeavours, by ſcrutiniſing a good practice, to aſcertain, *theoriſe*, and cultivate the principles by which it is determined. We do not preſume to ſay, in the firſt inſtance—ſuch a ſcheme would

be deſirable, therefore we will realiſe it by ſuch and ſuch a courſe;—but, ſuch and ſuch a courſe manifeſtly tends to ſuch an end; ſuch is the principle by which the tendency is determined; therefore we will aſſiſt the principle, and promote the reſult. Herein conſiſts the eſſential difference between, what we might call, *ſpeculative* and *practical* THEORY.

The PERMANENT CONGRESS which is here propoſed, would differ from the *General Council*, in the "*Grand political deſign*" of Henry IV. of France, by its *ſtructure*, which would be more ſimple;—it would alſo differ from that Council, as well as from Rouſſeau's *permanent Diet*, in his "*Project for a perpetual peace*," by its *functions*, which would be determined by the fundamental principles of its inſtitution.

It would differ, in the *ſimplicity of its ſtructure*, from that of Henry IV. by being nothing more than an *ordinary Congreſs*, or Aſſembly of Plenipotentiaries from each Court, rendered permanent; who would

be engaged, in ordinary times, in obſerving the aſpect of Europe—in conſulting concerning all things that could effect the collective intereſt—and in correſponding with their reſpective Courts. On extraordinary occaſions, it might receive an Ambaſſador Extraordinary from every Court; and it would conſtitute a board, always in function, for tranſacting the public buſineſs of Europe. Whereas, the General Council of Henry IV. was extremely complicated; differing in its conſtruction from all eſtabliſhed practices; and having ſubordinate Councils attached to it in different parts of Europe.

But in reſpect of its *functions*, it would differ ſtill more, both from the project of Henry, and from that of Rouſſeau. For, in the former of thoſe ſchemes, the principle avowed as fundamental, was the reduction of the Houſe of Auſtria: to effect which, a *perpetual armed confederacy* was propoſed to be formed of all the powers,

who were to make an entirely new diſtribution of the territory of Europe; and the *General Council*, in imitation of the Ampictyonic Council of the ſtates of Greece, was to repreſent, and to tranſact all the public buſineſs of, that *armed confederacy*.

In the latter ſcheme, the profeſſed end being viſionary, and in the nature of things impoſſible, the functions of the *Diet* which was intended to attain it, muſt of neceſſity be unreal and null. That favourite project of Rouſſeau, by which nothing leſs was to be attempted than the eternal extinction of war, and the eſtabliſhment of PERPETUAL PEACE between the powers of Europe, was one among numerous examples which ſhew, how feeble the ſuggeſtions of plain wiſdom become, when oppoſed by the impetuous ſallies of ſpeculative enthuſiaſm. Diſdaining the humble, but practical inquiry, how far we might be able to mitigate the calamities of human nature, by concerting means to *prolong the duration of peace, and render leſs frequent the recurrence of war*,

nothing would ſuit his uneaſy fancy, but the deſperate project, how war might be for ever abſolutely extinguiſhed, and peace rendered abſolutely perpetual *. He would fain have ſhut his eyes againſt this truth, that as long as any cauſe continues to exiſt, ſo long its natural effect will continue to be *producible*; and that, as long as the nature of man, which is the real original of war, ſhall remain unmetamorphoſed, no reſtrictions impoſed by man upon himſelf can receive ſufficient force to control his *will*, or to confine the action of thoſe various paſſions which derive their activity from the conſent of the will. Let ſpeculators ſcheme with the utmoſt labour of abſtraction, and the-

* This "*Project*" was uſhered into the world as that of the Abbé de St. Pierre. It was indeed followed by an "*Examen*," which ſeems to recogniſe little hopes of effect; but ſtill the phantom preſerved a viſible authority; nor was any attempt made to reduce the object within the bounds of poſſibility. Thus ſome good obſervations are loſt to practice, by being implicated in the abſurdity of the end to which they are applied. The "*Project*" is facetiouſly expoſed by Voltaire, in his *Reſcript de l'Empereur de la Chine.*

oretical ſtateſmen lend all their aſſiſtance to give ſubſtance to the viſion, ſtill war will be an ultimate iſſue for the paſſions of avarice and ambition;

Panca tamen ſuberunt priſcæ veſtigia fraudis.
————Erunt etiam ALTERA BELLA,
Atque iterum in Trojam magnus mittetur Achilles.

But the PERMANENT CONGRESS here propoſed, would be eſtabliſhed on no partial principle, and with no viſionary end. Its object would be univerſal and perpetual; namely,—*The defence, of the public law of Europe—of the foundations of civil ſociety—and of the balance of power.* And, far from attempting to accompliſh any thing impracticable, all its pretenſions would be reduced to this,—of doing *better*, *more expeditiouſly*, and by an *enlightened concert*—what is now doing by the blind operation of *ſecond cauſes*, imperfectly, tardily, and by piece-meal.

As a *centre of union*, it would furniſh that which ſeems to be abſolutely indiſpenſable to a ſyſtem, compoſed of ſeveral diſtinct

and independent parts; and without which its ſtructure appears to be, in an eminent degree, imperfect and inefficient.

From the want of ſuch a *fixed centre*, the great paramount law of European nations floats from court to court; and, like an unenthroned and wandering ſovereign, receives a cold or an intereſted protection from each. The reſpect we receive is commonly determined by the external circumſtances under which we appear; and the law of nations—deſtitute of any fixed tribunal within which ſhe might enſhrine her authority—and of all viſible enſigns of honour or of power—has, in theſe unhinged times, experienced a contumely, that might be conſidered as ſymptomatic of the decline of her authority. If therefore we would vindicate the public law of nations—if we would confirm its conſequence and authority—if we would render its authority conſpicuous and venerable to the eyes of Europe—and would ſupply it with reſources of perpetual vigour—we muſt afford it

ſuch a fixed tribunal, as it would acquire in a PERMANENT CONGRESS.

As *a focus* for concentrating the common energies, the Permanent Congreſs would preſent a perpetual medium, where thoſe energies might be made to meet;—without, at every turn, ſending miſſion after miſſion, to provide particular arrangements for every particular occaſion, in which concert might be required.

For want of *a ſtation* from whence a particular ſurvey might at all times be taken of the European world, numberleſs plots of treacherous policy eſcape obſervation and diſcovery; and thus, a ſecurity is acquired to intrigue, which, in the caſe propoſed, could hardly exiſt. Many things now paſs *under the carpet*, which in the caſe propoſed muſt be forced *above it*. And, as the moſt comprehenſive diſcernment cannot embrace the ſcattered detail of Europe, with equal attention to all its parts; and as there exiſts at preſent no ſtation in which a concentrated view of the whole can be obtained, by

means of channels converging in one point, many efforts ſucceſsfully elude detection at the important moment, which might otherwiſe have been effectually counteracted: ſo that what appears to be tranſacting with good hope in one part of Europe, ſhall be ſecretly fruſtrated in another. But, if the common concerns of nations were always to be brought before one Permanent Congreſs; and if an active correſpondence were maintained between the miniſters of all courts and their reſpective colleague in that Congreſs; it is manifeſt, that the obſtructions ariſing from delay and intrigue would be, comparatively, annihilated.

But it is as a *middle term* between the ſecret intrigues of cabinets and the open rupture of war, that the ſcheme of a permanent congreſs ſeems to be of particular importance. It is in this point of view that it appears to poſſeſs the moſt ſalutary tendency to prolong the duration of peace, by accumulating increaſed difficulties againſt the recurrence of war. If the Powers of

Europe, in contracting a peace, *ſhould unite in a ſyſtem of concert*; and if they ſhould further conſent to eſtabliſh a Permanent Congreſs for managing the common intereſts of Europe, they would not heſitate to render it an article in the general compact,—that, in the event of any diſputes or miſunderſtanding between two powers, and previouſly to their making the breach of war, thoſe powers ſhould be held to be bound by the *Law of European Nations* to bring their differences and their claims before the Permanent Congreſs; the adjuſtment of which ſhould be held to be an object of the common concern. And, that a limited time ſhould, by the ſame authority, be preſcribed for the deliberation of the Congreſs, before the diſputants ſhould proceed to an actual interruption of the common tranquillity.

Did the European powers poſſeſs ſuch a centre of union, ſuch a medium for concentrating their councils and their actions; and did they zealouſly adopt the principles

by which they ought to uſe it; there cannot, I conceive, remain any doubt, but that a public organ, ſo conſtituted and empowered, would preſent very formidable oppoſition to any ſtate attempting to provoke the renewal of war; and that many hoſtile movements would be effectually checked, by the ſeaſonable and awful interference of the permanent Congreſs.

Again, in the event of war actually taking place, what the Congreſs was unable at firſt to accompliſh for the *preſervation* of peace, in its capacity of a *middle term* between diſpute and war, it would be able in a great degree to effect as a *permanent* and *ſtationary organ*, ever ready, without loſs of time, or *delay of conferences or preliminaries*, to *reſtore* the peace unhappily interrupted. For, as all queſtions preparatory to war ſhould come before it, ſo alſo all negociations for peace. And being always duly empowered for all theſe occa-

ſions; and experiencing no alteration from war in its conſtituent members, who ſhould be conſidered as always in a ſtate of peace; it appears manifeſt, that peace would acquire by its inſtitution facilities as great as the obſtructions, that, on the other hand, would be oppoſed to war.

Laſtly, ſuch a permanent Congreſs *might* be rendered beneficial, in an eſſential and eminent degree, to the Chriſtian cauſe, by its concerted endeavours to revive the Chriſtian ſpirit, and to promote a true and active harmony between all the different Chriſtian communions. By which word, *communion*, I intend thoſe grand diviſions into which Chriſtendom found itſelf divided by the action of the Reformation; all of which have fully learned, by the events of the preſent monſtrous conflict, *how* SOLIDLY *all their intereſts* BOTTOM IN ONE COMMON CAUSE. By means of the permanent Congreſs, therefore, the utmoſt harmony might be eſtabliſhed

and maintained between the Greek, the Latin, the Lutheran, the Anglican, and the different branches of the Swiſs churches. By the wiſdom and temper of this body, ſupported by their reſpective governments at home, all that was ever *really practicable* in the different ſchemes deviſed for the re-union of the Chriſtian churches might be accompliſhed:—and, while each church gave all attention to repair and maintain as much as poſſible the fundamentals of Chriſtianity, as they each held it, the Congreſs itſelf might contribute effectual energy, for eſtabliſhing among them all a ſpirit of reflective concord and PRACTICAL UNITY.

Nor would it be intended to exclude the Ottoman Porte from the political benefits that might ariſe from the meaſure here ſuggeſted, ſhould that Court be diſpoſed to become a party in it. We cannot, in the preſent criſis of the world, extend too widely the principles of ſociety,

nor be too active in our endeavours to eſtabliſh among "all nations UNITY, PEACE, and CONCORD." And ſince that Power is now united with two of the firſt Chriſtian Powers in the cloſeſt bonds of amity; and has exhibited ſo gratifying an evidence of its growing diſpoſitions to adopt thoſe liberal principles of policy which diſtinguiſh the great ſyſtem of Chriſtian Europe; the aſſociation of that Power might ultimately become the happy means of diffuſing ſtill more extenſively, principles and practices ſo neceſſary for the improvement and civilization of mankind.

There might perhaps be ſome difficulty in determining upon the place where the permanent Congreſs ſhould reſide. To obviate this I would venture to ſuggeſt; that, ſince it is impoſſible but that, at the winding up of the preſent war, ſome transfer, or change in the circumſtances, of territory, muſt take place in parts of Europe; ſome central city, together with

a circumjacent diſtrict, might be reſerved by the Treaty of Peace, as the ſeat of the Permanent Congreſs: which city and diſtrict might be ſecured, for ever, againſt all violation from war, under the general guarantee of all the Powers of Europe.

There are ſeveral Free-Cities in Germany which are governed by their own laws. One of theſe cities would perhaps be beſt adapted for the propoſed meaſure; and being taken under the protection of the Public Body, would be ſecured in the poſſeſſion and exerciſe of all its rights and privileges; and in no inſtance be under the control of the Congreſs, except in ſuch particular and manifeſt caſes as ſhould intimately and eſſentially affect the ſecurity and dignity of that Law of Nations, to exalt and invigorate the authority of which, would be the only reaſon for appointing a Permanent Congreſs.

Such is the ſcheme ſuggeſted, frankly, but with ſincere diffidence, in order to improve

in future the ſyſtem of Continental Peace, whenever we ſhall be ſo fortunate as to be able to procure *a Peace worth ſecuring*. Whatever other objection may be raiſed againſt it, no one can with any juſtice allege, that its object is viſionary or vain—or that the means it propoſes are intricate or impracticable. It cannot be denied, that to render *permanent* the inſtitution of a *General Congreſs*, ſo often reſorted to for managing the Public Concerns of Europe, and to retain it as a centre of union, and a perpetual organ, or board, for tranſacting the common affairs of Nations, would not be an *impracticable* meaſure;——and I think it cannot any more be denied, that ſuch a meaſure bears upon its face every appearance of being really calculated *to oppoſe very obſtinate difficulties to the recurrence of War*, and by that means neceſſarily *to impart extended duration to the bleſſings of Peace*.

III.

The interval, however, which, notwithſtanding the moſt devout aſpirations after peace, and the moſt active labours to attain it, MUST, from the nature of things, have its courſe, is to be employed to other purpoſes, beſides contemplating the neceſſary ingredients of a future peace, and concerting new methods for ſecuring it. We are ourſelves, under Providence, the inſtruments by which we muſt, firſt of all, render ourſelves maſters of the POWER NECESSARY for making and ſecuring that peace; and it is left to us, either by a wary wiſdom, a ſteady temper, and a gallant perſiſtance, to bring forward the growth of peace to a full-formed, ſplendid, and beneficent fruit;—or, by an intemperate folly, and puerile imbecillity, to ſnatch it green and noxious from its branch, and bear it away—

Shrunk like ſome FOUL ABORTION, and decayed
Like ſome UNTIMELY PRODUCT of the ſeaſons!

In ſpite of all the various incidents

which have paſſed in review before us in the courſe of the laſt ſeven years, the cauſes that firſt occaſioned us to arm are, in reſpect of any evidence teſtifying to the contrary, juſt as perniciouſly vigorous as ever. If we had reaſon to reſiſt them *at the firſt*, we have reaſon for continuing to oppoſe them *now*. They are neither extinguiſhed, nor ſubdued; and are equally ready and equally capable to watch the moment when we may diſcontinue our guard, in order to inflict the blow we have ſo long ſucceeded in warding off. Thoſe who planned and executed the conqueſt of Egypt, with the avowed deſign of ultimately joining force with the late Sultan of Myſore, in order to extinguiſh Great Britain in India;—thoſe who publicly proclaimed, that the concluſion of the treaty of Campo Formio, by debarraſſing France of all continental concerns, would enable her to concentrate all her means of offence for the deſtruction of

Great Britain, whoſe conſtitution they alleged *could not co-exiſt* with the ſafety of the French Republic;—thoſe very perſons are *now* maſters of all the power, CIVIL AND MILITARY, of France. And the oſtenſible head of its new government, inſtead of reprobating and diſowning thoſe flagitious tranſactions which firſt involved Great Britain in the preſent calamitous war—inſtead of teſtifying any anxiety to proclaim his diſſociation from the principles which gave riſe to thoſe tranſactions, or to exonerate himſelf from the odium of preſerving the ſame principles in the ſame ſeat of power,—appears, in the only public occaſion hitherto afforded, to have rather exhibited himſelf a deliberate and ſyſtematical extenuator of them all.

The *Britiſh* apologiſts of French aggreſſion may exerciſe their abilities in repairing arguments long ſince diſabled, and worn down by the action of repeated confutation; but they will find, that the matured

ſenſe and practiſed diſcernment of the Britiſh nation, which it owes to the diſaſtrous experience of the times, are proof againſt thoſe, and far more ſubtile, efforts of the ſophiſtry of party. They will find, that the Britiſh nation KNOWS AND FEELS, to *what* it owes its preſent condition of UNVIOLATED SECURITY—UNTARNISHED GLORY—and ACCUMULATED PROSPERITY; and it will never conſent to ſurrender up, *the means* by which it has been enabled to acquire thoſe ineſtimable bleſſings.

The witchcraft of *words* has loſt all efficacy over this inſtructed people. They will *not* conſent to encounter the ſubverſion of their conſtitution, and the abolition of all legal ſecurity, at the name of LIBERTY; and they *will* perſevere in making the ſtrength of the law, and the ſecurity of the ſovereign, keep pace with the growth of ſedition and rebellion, in ſpite of the names of TYRANNY and SLAVERY. The *mere name* of WHIG can inſpire them

with no blind and indiſcriminating enthuſiaſm; they can frequently diſcern, under cover of that name, ſentiments far more congenial to the novelties of France, than to the old eſtabliſhment of England; and can as frequently diſcover, under the opprobrium of COURTIER and of TORY, not only thoſe honourable principles which re-inſtated a ſovereign upon his throne, but that gallant ſpirit alſo, which at the ſame time raiſed barriers againſt the exceſs of his prerogative. They feel, that the diſſemination of faction and ſedition is not the genuine ſpirit of the FREEDOM OF THE PRESS; and that, a vexatious and ſyſtematic embarraſſment of an arduous adminiſtration, could never have conſtituted FRIENDSHIP TO THE PEOPLE.

By the ſame rule of diſcernment they perceive, with full evidence, in *what* national PRODIGALITY and national ECONOMY conſiſt, in the preſent criſis of affairs. That *no* ſcheme of PRODIGALITY could be half ſo

extravagant and ruinous as that, which would now throw aſide and nullify our enormous energy of war, acquired at the expence of ſo much time, ſo much labour, ſo much treaſure, and ſo much blood; and would reduce the country to the deſperate neceſſity of incurring all the ſame expences over again, after ſome five or ſix gloomy years of humiliation and diſguſt;—on the other hand, that no ſyſtem of ECONOMY can be half ſo ſound and productive as that, which would perſiſt in *retaining and* USING *our energy now that we* HAVE ACQUIRED IT—(an energy, which is the *compound reſult* of ſeven years unrelaxing effort of vigorous war)—until we ſhall have derived from it all the fruit that it is capable of yielding: thus, providently ſaving the country from the certain neceſſity of treading over again, at no long diſtance of time, the ſame miſerable ground of bloodſhed and expence. The NATION can plainly ſee—nor can all the duſt raiſed by faction obſtruct its ſight—

that there exiſts not in nature ſo ſure a courſe to profitable peace as energetic war; nor ſo certain a channel to a calamitous war, as an unſound and factious peace.

It can likewiſe calculate its own ſtrength; and can judge, how far it is competent to prefer *energetic war* to *factious peace*. When it takes a ſurvey of the globe, and compares the circumſtances of the preſent hour with thoſe of a year back, it is divided between the exultation of triumph and the proſtration of gratitude. When it looks back little more than twelve months, it ſees itſelf almoſt without an ally or coadjutor in the world; and expoſed to the efforts of a victorious and vigorous enemy, plotting and proſecuting its deſtruction in every quarter of the earth. Compelled to cover its entire inſular frontier with its troops, and its ſeas with its ſhips, it ſees the fleets of France, Spain, and Holland, prepared, in their reſpective ports, to co-operate with active

rebellion, and to carry invaſion and revolution into Ireland. It ſees its numerous forces diſtributed throughout its territory, and condemned to a ſyſtem of general defence; and the attention and vigilance of its government diſtracted by the number and diſtance of the points which it has to guard. It ſees its Empire in India aſſailed by a formidable confederacy of its two moſt active enemies, and the means of concert between the two rendered every day leſs equivocal and more probable. It ſees the armies of France inundating Piedmont and Italy with all the primitive virulence of revolutionary frenzy. It ſees Germany invaded and unprotected—the Princes of the Empire terrified into neutrality,—and ſymptoms of a myſterious and dangerous policy of compromiſe, infecting the Cabinet of Vienna.

When it turns its view to the *preſent hour*, it perceives a ſcene as directly oppoſite, as the moſt ingenious and active fancy could

poſſibly repreſent it. It ſees itſelf in cloſe alliance with two powerful and victorious empires. It ſees THE ANNIHILATION OF THE NAVY OF HOLLAND. It thus ſees *all anxiety for its* EASTERN FRONTIER *entirely done away*—the forces and the fleets, ſo long neceſſary for its ſecurity, ſet free from their confinement, to be employed actively and offenſively againſt the enemy. It ſees the attention of its government no longer diſtracted by a ſyſtem of extended defence. It ſees the concentration of its naval force at home againſt the ſingle port of Breſt. It *foreſees* its proſperity and power multiplied beyond calculation—the beſt hopes of rebellion extinguiſhed for ever—and PERFECTION AT LENGTH GIVEN TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, by that moſt great and moſt beneficent of all public meaſures, THE UNION AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE PARLIAMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND. It ſees,

by a military operation unexampled in hiſtory, its Indian Empire relieved for ever from its perfidious enemy, aggrandiſed from the conqueſt of his uſurped provinces, and ſecured by the RESTORATION OF AN ALLY TO HIS THRONE.—— It ſees Italy and Piedmont, by a ſeries of the moſt amazing victories, recovered from invaſion, and ſecured by a chain of reconquered fortreſſes. It ſees the enemy embarraſſed at home by a large portion of his own country in determined hoſtility againſt him, and abundantly ſupplied with arms and every neceſſary of war. It ſees the heavy effects of an annihilated commerce accumulating upon that wretched country in a proportion as great, as it ſees the oppoſite effects of its own triumphant commerce accumulate in its own ports. It ſees its own armies and fleets ſtrong, well appointed, well diſciplined, and ready for immediate ſervice. It ſees the Imperial ar-

mies, animated by the moſt valourous ſpirit, pouring down upon the theatre of action. Laſtly, it ſees that we touch at THE VERY MOMENT, when this powerful apparatus of war is to break forth, in deep concert, upon the common enemy.

Juſt at this critical moment, it ſees that enemy propoſe, that we ſhould INTERMIT THE BLOW. It ſees the Government of England return a poſitive negative to the propoſal; determined TO USE THE FORCE ſo long preparing, and ſo dearly acquired, in advancement of the common cauſe, and as the ſureſt and moſt expeditious proceſs for the attainment of its great end—A SAFE AND HONORABLE PEACE.—The nation hears, at the ſame time, ſome voices chime in with the propoſal of the enemy, and loudly and angrily criminate the Government for its wiſe and magnanimous determination; but it turns away its ear from thoſe ſounds with a ſentiment of deep concern, anxious only to obſerve, whether they,

who exerciſe its powers, WILL USE them effectually for its DEFENCE.

A noble Lord has remarked in debate, that it would be *madneſs* in Miniſters to ſuſpend the energy of the war at the preſent criſis, by conſenting to *an* ARMISTICE;——though indeed, the *inſanity* that could prompt to ſuch a meaſure, at ſuch a time, would have no title to the dignity of madneſs. But it would be a farce to talk of the madneſs of the meaſure, ſhould any Miniſter be daring enough to adopt it. Men who engage in the reſponſibility wiſely attached to the ſtation of a Miniſter, are not to be publicly conſidered as madmen or fools, whatever they may be in themſelves. If therefore any Miniſter ſhould take upon himſelf, *to invigorate the enemy at the expence of England—and to nullify the force for the formation of which we have ſo profuſely contributed*,—we muſt look to another principle than *madneſs* to explain his conduct:—and let him be aſſured,

that the indignation and vengeance of a betrayed people will, ſooner or later, demand, by one voice, upon ſuch a Miniſter, not the coercion of madneſs, but of crime —not the ſtrait-waiſtcoat, but the block.

Whatever may be ſaid on the article of *negociation*, let us at leaſt beware of AN ARMISTICE. If it ſhould appear that negociation *may* conduce to peace (an hypotheſis, however, for which I cannot diſcern *at preſent* any ground whatever)—let us confer—let us treat—but, let us *refuſe an* ARMISTICE.—Let not the meaſures of *negociation* and *ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities*, be ſuppoſed to be *one* and *inſeparable*;—let us keep our ideas diſtinct, and uninvolved by the ſophiſtry of faction. If we conſent to *negociate*, let it be *without an armiſtice*. Let the energy of war, and the wiſdom of council, go hand in hand, and mutually ſecond each other. If we treat to-morrow, let us redouble the energy of war. Let us ever keep in our minds, that the PEACE

we are ſo anxious to generate, muſt derive all its *ſubſtance* from the ſword; that it is only its *form* that it receives from the pen; and that according to the contributions of the ſword will be either its ſolidity and bulk, or its vacuity and ſhadow. Let us, indeed, deeply lament the calamities which the natural depravity of man, in the firſt inſtance, and his augmented depravity in France, in the ſecond inſtance, have brought by the preſent war upon the world;—let us copiouſly ſhare in all the honeſt grief that a reflection upon thoſe calamities muſt excite;—but let us repel, with dignified ſcorn, the inſults of revolutionary pathos, and of Jacobin morality. The author of theſe pages participates in that ſentiment at leaſt as profoundly, as the moſt canting whiner in the tribunes of illuminiſm; but, at the ſame time, he is perfectly aware, that the moſt certain and moſt expeditious means of abridging the preſent ſufferings, and of extinguiſhing their cauſe, is by vigorouſly

proſecuting the war at the preſent ſplendid conjuncture. Let us then reſolve, in due time, *to terminate* the war, but never *to relax* or *to ſuſpend it*. The hour in which we grant an armiſtice, ſurrenders up at leaſt one half of the harveſt of our labours :— it imparts reſt, and with it vigour to the enemy—it tempers his alarms—it repairs the perplexity of his affairs—it opens the communication between his ports—it removes the multiplied difficulties that embarraſs him—and it enables him, at the period of his own convenience, to break off from negociation, and to re-enter powerfully into the field of blood.

But, let us now take a ſhort view alſo of the policy of *negociation*.

Thoſe politicians, whoſe opinions have prompted them, during the laſt ſeven years, to perſiſt in oppoſing the meaſures by which we have nevertheleſs been eventually conducted, through unparalleled dangers, to our preſent condition of ſecurity

and eaſe, are importunate with the public and with Government, that we ſhould meet, without heſitation, the diſpoſitions for negociation profeſſed on the part of the enemy; and that we ſhould enter, at once, upon a confidential courſe of treaty for the re-eſtabliſhment of peace. But theſe advocates for repoſing that confidence in the enemy, which they refuſe to the miniſters of their own country, will unqueſtionably grant, that the confidence which they call upon us to repoſe, muſt depend upon one of theſe things:—either the *ſtability* of the actual government of France—or the *power*, or the *perſonal character*, of the individual at the head of that government.

"It is from the FUNDAMENTAL LAWS "of each ſtate that we muſt learn, *where* "reſides the authority that IS CAPABLE of "contracting WITH VALIDITY in the name "of the ſtate." *

This ancient rule of mature policy can

* VATTEL, B. II. § 154.

ſtand us in no ſtead on the preſent occaſion; becauſe we are utterly unable to refer to any *fundamental laws*, in the repeated changes that have taken place, and probably will ſtill take place, in the internal regimen of France.

We are therefore reduced to the irkſome taſk of endeavouring to compute our *chance* of ſecurity in negociation, by the ſtability of the actual government of France; or by the power, or by the perſonal character, of the individual who actually directs that government.

Now, the *ſtability* of a government that has not exiſted four months, and whoſe production was ſudden and momentaneous, is as yet, in the judgment of reaſon, a non-entity. That ſtability which is only to be proved by the lapſe of time, can afford no evidence of its exiſtence until time ſhall have elapſed to prove it.

And, in regard of the mere *power of the individual* at the head of that government,

let us obſerve—that the durability of his power is no better proved than the ſtability of the government. And if the duration of his authority is to be determined, not only by the caſualties naturally impending over the life of man, but alſo, by thoſe extraordinary perils to which extraordinary exaltation always expoſes, that duration can aſſuredly pledge little worthy of the acceptance of Great Britain, whoſe healthful and well-compacted ſyſtem of power is rooted in a rock of ages.

We are therefore brought to the laſt alternative, of *perſonal character*. In examining which, we have to direct our attention to two points—the VIEWS—and the PRINCIPLES—of the individual.

The *views* of this remarkable perſon have been amply demonſtrated, not only by his own declarations, but likewiſe, by the gigantic labours, which he has already actually undergone, in order to accompliſh them. The great work that ſtands fore-

moſt in the detail of his military career—the occupation of Egypt by an immenſe armament—was undertaken, not only with a view to add a valuable dependancy to France, but alſo avowedly in progreſs to an *ultimate work*, namely, the junction of force with a native Indian power, for the annihilation of our commercial empire.

Upon his arrival off the coaſt of Egypt, in June, 1798, he iſſued a proclamation to the army under his command, in which he employed theſe words, for ever memorable to the Britiſh nation:

"SOLDIERS!—You are going to under-"take A CONQUEST, the effects of which "upon commerce and civilization will be "incalculable. You will give THE ENG-"LISH a moſt ſenſible blow, which will be "followed up with THEIR DESTRUC-"TION!" *

When the progreſs of events brought

* *Copies of Letters from the French Army in Egypt.* Part I. Appendix. No. 2.

about the myſterious circumſtance of his ſudden departure for France, he left behind him the following emphatic ſentence, addreſſed to his honourable ſucceſſor in the command:

"No one can eſtimate better than your-"ſelf, Citizen General, HOW IMPORTANT "THE POSSESSION OF EGYPT IS TO "FRANCE! The Turkiſh Empire, threat-"ened on all ſides with ruin, *is at this in-"ſtant falling to pieces*; and the evacuation "of Egypt by France would be the more "diſaſtrous, as we ſhould preſently ſee this "fine province paſs into other European "hands." *

Upon his return home, having overthrown the exiſting government, and having taken its authority upon himſelf, he found in the official diſpatches ‡ tranſmitted

* *Copies of Letters, &c. from Egypt.* Part III. No. 3. p. 20.

‡ The duplicates of theſe diſpatches were intercepted, and are publiſhed in the third part of the *Intercepted Correſpondence, &c.*

from Egypt to his predeceſſors in power, the following councils, urgently addreſſed by the very perſons, to whoſe hands he himſelf had confided the management of that favorite and important conqueſt:

"OUR SITUATION IS DESPERATE.—— "A defeat would annihilate us all to the "laſt man. And, however brave the army "may be, it cannot LONG AVERT THAT "FATAL EVENT." *

"The ONLY EVENT which could POSSI- "BLY ENABLE US TO PRESERVE EGYPT, "would be an immediate war between "Ruſſia and the Porte†.——If the Porte "were ſure of a powerful alliance, which "would ſupport her feeble efforts at the "outſet, and would finally render her vic- "torious, ſhe would not heſitate an inſtant "in forming her reſolution."

"But, after all, theſe meaſures (as I have "already ſaid) *cannot be put in execution*, UN- "LESS THE ENGLISH BECOME A PARTY

* Ib. No. 12. p. 138. † Ib. p. 48.

" IN THEM, and unite with the Porte and " WITH US. Now, ſince the French Re- " public can apprehend nothing from the " Engliſh but what is trifling when com- " pared with the loſſes that it would inevit- " ably ſuſtain by the eſtabliſhment of the " Ruſſians in the Mediterranean; ſince there " is not a hope, that, during the preſent war, " we ſhall be able to recover from the Eng- " liſh any part of what they have taken from " us, unleſs by an IMMEDIATE TREATY— " *(un prompt traité)* which treaty ſhould " hold out to them equivalent advantages in " exchange; and ſince, on the ſuppoſition, " that they would agree to no ſuch reſti- " tution, there would be no PRESENT PUR- " POSE anſwered by *continuing the war*, and " no inconvenience ſuſtained by ADJOURN- " ING OUR CLAIMS *to a* HAPPIER PE- " RIOD; the Executive Directory—may " eaſily remove every difficulty;—and, " by AN ALLIANCE WITH ENGLAND and " the Porte, *deliver*, at one ſtroke, *the*

" *French Republic* from thoſe two powerful " enemies, and from all others, whoſe fall " theſe would neceſſarily enſure."

" *At all events, it is* INDISPENSABLE TO " OPEN NEGOCIATIONS, *in the* " MOST EARNEST MANNER, *with* " *the* ENGLISH *and the Porte; even if* " NO OTHER ADVANTAGE *ſhould* " *reſult from them than* GAINING TIME, " *and giving* OFFENCE TO RUSSIA;—ſuch " AN OFFENCE as ſhould induce her to de- " clare war againſt the Grand Seignior; to " an opportunity of doing which, ſhe " ſeems to look forward with impa- " tience." *

" The Ottoman Empire is generally re- " garded as an old edifice, *tottering to its* " *fall.* The European powers have long " been preparing *to divide its ſcattered frag-* " *ments*; and many politicians conceive, " that the cataſtrophe is cloſe at hand. " Under this ſuppoſition, they think it

* Ib. No. 10. p. 89, 90, 91.

" BUT RIGHT *that* FRANCE *ſhould have* " HER SHARE *in the ſpoil*; AND THE PART " ALLOTTED TO HER IS EGYPT." *

Such are the counſels of policy addreſſed with exceſſive earneſtneſs from POUSSIELGUE, Comptroller of the expences of the army, and Adminiſtrator-general of the finances of Egypt; the prudence and neceſſity of which he himſelf certifies in theſe ſtrong and notable expreſſions:—" I con- " ceive I owe to you, after the departure " of General Bonaparte, and in the critical

* Ib. No. 12. p. 149.—It is well known, that this avidity of France to poſſeſs herſelf of Egypt———both as a valuable dependancy, and as a means of, ſooner or later, inflicting a wound upon our Indian empire,—is no new ſcheme of policy, originating in the French Revolution. The actual ſeizure of Egypt was only the reſolute execution of a plan concerted under the regal government, but for which the politics of that government were not ſufficiently ripe.—See the firſt paper in the Appendix to Eton's *Survey of the Turkiſh Empire*; in which it is aſſerted—" *Were the French poſſeſſed of* " EGYPT, *they might abandon their Weſt-India iſlands.*"

" ſituation in which he leaves us, a con-
" ciſe but faithful repreſentation of the
" obſervations which I have collected, and
" THE POLITICAL OPINIONS *which natu-*
" *rally flow from them.* *—I am not afraid,
" Citizen Directors, to lay before you *the*
" *naked truth*; and be aſſured that, how-
" ever ſtrong the repreſentation I have juſt
" made, you would find it but feeble and
" imperfect, if the limits of a letter would
" allow me to enter into greater details."*

The weight which theſe counſels are likely to acquire with the Chief Conſul of the French Republic, with whoſe ſentiments they ſo remarkably coincide, may be beſt inferred from the teſtimony of his own expreſs opinion of the character of this very Financier. " Citizen POUSSIELGUE," ſays he, in his confidential letter to his ſucceſſor, General KLEBER, " has the excluſive
" management of the finances; I have diſ-

* Ib. No. 12. p. 123. 132.

"covered him to be *a man of* BUSINESS,
"*and of* WORTH."*

I ſhall not treat my reader with ſo much diſreſpect, after this ſtatement, as to offer any comment upon theſe luminous and all-ſufficient evidences; which, preſented to a temperate reaſon, muſt enable him to form an infallible judgment of the REAL VIEWS of the actual Governor of France, in his recent overtures for negociation. I ſhall therefore proceed on, to take a ſummary ſurvey of the PRINCIPLES of the ſame perſonage.

In reſpect of *theſe*, much more is to be ſaid than can accord with the ſentiments of any perſons who wiſh not unneceſſarily to exaſperate the feelings of an enemy; and who are not under the neceſſity of thoſe in high official ſituations, to open an unreſerved detail of the conduct of the man with whoſe character they are called upon to commit their own. This, however, we may and

* Ib. No. III. p. 22.

muſt ſay,—that in almoſt all occaſions in which we have hitherto been able to obſerve and inveſtigate the conduct and principles of the perſon in queſtion, we have found them to be ſuch as to inſpire us with a ſentiment *very oppoſite to confidence*. When we have ſeen almoſt every engagement that he has contracted broken by himſelf, at the moment when the infraction beſt ſuited with his convenience—when we have ſeen him abrogate the moſt ſolemn acts by the ſword, as ſoon as they preſented obſtructions to the career of his ambition—and when we have been ſo ſingularly fortunate as to obtain poſſeſſion of the KEY *of his* POLICY—viz. "*to* OPEN NEGOCIATIONS *in* "*the* MOST EARNEST MANNER, *in order to* "GAIN TIME;"—"ENTAMER VIVEMENT "*des négotiations pour* GAGNER DU TEMPS;" —we muſt be either very careleſs to preſerve, or very eager to betray, our country, if we heſitate to recogniſe, in his conduct, the unequivocal and very proper marks of

PERFIDY. I acknowledge it is a very hard word, and I wiſh it were poſſible to qualify it without treaſon to my argument; but, as long as the world ſhall continue to laſt, the oppoſite to truth will be falſehood, and the oppoſite to fidelity will be PERFIDY. "The reproach of *perfidy* (ſays the excel- "lent Vattel) is eſteemed by ſovereigns a "moſt atrocious affront; yet he, *who does not* "*obſerve a treaty, is certainly* PERFIDIOUS, "*ſince he* VIOLATES HIS FAITH *.

"He, who violates his TREATIES, (ſays "the ſame foreign writer) violates, at the "ſame time, the LAW OF NATIONS; for he "diſregards the faith of treaties,—that faith "which the law of nations declares ſacred; "and, ſo far as depends on him, he renders "it vain and ineffectual. Doubly guilty, "he does an injury to his ally, he does an "injury *to all nations*, and *inflicts a wound* "*on the* GREAT SOCIETY OF MANKIND †. "—On the other hand, nothing adds ſo "great a glory to a prince, and to the na-

* B. II. § 163. † Ib. B. II. § 221.

" tion he governs, as the reputation of an " INVIOLABLE FIDELITY in the perform- " ance of promiſes. By ſuch honourable " conduct, as much or even more than by " her valour, the SWISS NATION has ren- " dered herſelf reſpectable throughout Eu- " rope, and is deſervedly courted by the " greateſt monarchs, who entruſt their per- " ſonal ſafety to a body-guard of her citizens. " The PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND " has more than once thanked the King, " for his FIDELITY AND ZEAL IN SUCCOUR- " ING THE ALLIES OF HIS CROWN. This " national magnanimity is the ſource of im- " mortal glory; it preſents a FIRM BASIS " on which nations may build their confi- " dence; and thus it becomes an UNFAIL- " ING SOURCE OF POWER AND OF SPLEN- " DOUR." *

Now, our conduct towards a PERFIDIOUS ENEMY admits not, I conceive, of doubt or variety. But the rule by which that

* Ib. ib. § 163.

conduct is marked out by the ſame great maſter whom I have juſt quoted, is too pertinent and too particular not to claim our attention on the preſent occaſion.

" When a ſovereign (ſays he) has *been* " *compelled to take up arms for* JUST *and* IM- " PORTANT REASONS, he may carry on the " operations of war till he has attained its " lawful end; which is, to procure juſtice " and SAFETY.

" If the cauſe be dubious, the juſt end " of war can only be, to bring the enemy to " an equitable compromiſe; and conſe- " quently the war muſt not be continued " beyond that point. The moment our " enemy propoſes or conſents to ſuch com- " promiſe, it is our duty to deſiſt from " hoſtilities.

" BUT, *if we have to do with a* PERFIDI- " OUS ENEMY, *it would be* IMPRUDENT *to* " TRUST *either his* WORDS *or his* OATHS. " IN SUCH CASE, JUSTICE ALLOWS *and* " PRUDENCE REQUIRES *that we ſhould* AVAIL

" OURSELVES OF A SUCCESSFUL WAR, and " FOLLOW UP OUR ADVANTAGES, *till we* " *have* HUMBLED A DANGEROUS AND EX- " CESSIVE POWER, *or compelled the enemy* " *to give us* SUFFICIENT SECURITY FOR THE " TIME TO COME." *

The manifeſt wiſdom and juſtice of this doctrine can derive no additional authority even from the name of VATTEL; and we plainly perceive by it, that in all tranſactions reſpecting peace, we are to ſearch with ſcrutiny into the perſonal character of the enemy in whom it is propoſed to us to *confide*;—and alſo, that the rule of our *confidence* is to be altogether determined by what we may diſcover in that character.

I moſt ſincerely and devoutly wiſh, that the new and extraordinary ſituation in which the perſon whoſe character we are conſidering is placed, may open to him views ENTIRELY NEW; and may inſpire him with principles of policy QUITE OPPOSITE to

* B. IV. § 6.

thoſe which we condemn, and againſt which it is abſolutely neceſſary for us *to continue vigorouſly to* DEFEND *our country and the world.* I moſt devoutly wiſh, that his mind may be ſo free from the dominion of ambition, and of various other paſſions which have acquired augmented force from the French Revolution, as to be able to diſcern, that he ſtands at a criſis at which he has it YET in his power to chooſe between SECURE GLORY and TRANSIENT SPLENDOUR—between the ADMIRATION and BLESSINGS, or the DETESTATION and CURSES, of this age and of poſterity. And that he may make *ſuch election* between the two, as may overrule all the concluſions we are now compelled to draw, from the inſtances of his *paſt* meaſures, againſt the wiſdom or even *common ſenſe* of liſtening to negociation. But we muſt be ſenſible—and common candour on all ſides will not heſitate to grant—that ALL THIS REMAINS YET TO BE DONE.

And, ſince wiſdom—and the duty im-

poſed by that SACRED TRUST under which exiſting generations occupy the benefits of life for the ſervice of *poſterity*—require of us to create no wanton delay in our endeavours to reinſtate the Chriſtian world in ſecurity and peace; it behoves us, *if we* ARE *ſtrong*, to USE *our ſtrength*,—if we CAN *employ* inſtruments of force and efficacy to that end, TO *employ* them with reſolution and diſpatch.

THE PEACE towards which our minds are now ſo anxiouſly directed, muſt be an event that can allow of no compariſon whatever with the ordinary terminations of diſſenſion and hoſtility between power and power. It muſt be a criſis, as I have already remarked, that can have no object of reſemblance in the experience of hiſtory, unleſs it be the famous PEACE OF WESTPHALIA; by which, the relations of power, and the complexion of ſociety, were finally determined, after a long and bloody ſtruggle between all the powers

of Europe; and according to which, they have continued to remain, without any material alteration, for an hundred and fifty Years. The preſent convulſions of Europe have ſhattered the foundations of that peace, and with it the political fabric of Europe; and nothing leſs muſt be attempted by the future peace, than the entire reparation of thoſe foundations, and of the fabric which they are to ſuſtain.

By the FUTURE PEACE, therefore, it will remain for US alſo to eſtabliſh, and to fix, the future relations of power in the GREAT BALANCE. It will be for US, likewiſe, to determine *the future* COMPLEXION OF SOCIETY *in Europe*;—and we cannot ſurely fail to be awake to all the promptings of experience, which ſo importunately warn us to be well upon our guard,—WHAT TINT we ſuffer to PREDOMINATE in THAT COMPLEXION.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PRINTED BY JAMES BATESON, DENMARK STREET, SOHO.